

Message Text

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E.O. 11652: N/U
TAGS: SOPN, US, CA
SUBJECT: CANADAIN JOURNALISTS DISCUSS US, CANADA AND RELATIONSHIPS

REF: TORONTO A-10 (NOTAL)

1. MARCH 21 EVENING CURRENT EVENTS PROGRAM "EDUCATION OF MIKE MCMANUS" ON ONTARIO PUBLIC TELEVISION NETWORK (TV ONTARIO)00 FEATURED DISCUSSION BETWEEN MCMANUS, VAL SEARS OF TORONTO STAR WASHINGTON BUREAU AND WALTER STEWART, FORMER WASHINGTON BUREAU CHIEF OF MACLEAN'S MAGAZINE ON TOPIC OF US-CANADIAN RELATIONSHIP.

2. ON NEW US ADMINISTRATION, SEARS AND STEWART DIFFER. CONSIDERABLY, FORMER SEEING "LOTS OF PROMISE," LATTER CLAIMING MOOD OF US PEOPLE BEING USED TO "FOOL AROUND" WITH TREMENDOUS MOVEMENT AND NO SUBSTANCE. SEARS ADMIRER ANNOUNCED PROGRAMS AND WHILE ADMITTED LACK OF PROPOSED LEGISLATION, FELT IT STILL TOO EARLY. BOTH AGREED ON FAVORABLE PRESS OF CARTER ADMINISTRATION BUT WHILE SEARS FELT PRESIDENT "HAS DAZZLED" MEDIA WITH HIS FOOTWORK, STEWART TERMED US PRESS "PUSSYCATS" WHO COULD BE LED.

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3. IN DISCUSSION, BOTH MEN AGREED ON LOW QUALITY OTTAWA PRESS CORPS FOR PAST 20 YEARS. BOTH HAD SERVED OTTAWA. SEARS FELT MAJOR DIFFERENCE OTTAWA/WASHINGTON WAS ACCESSIBILITY OF US CIVIL SERVICE AND THEIR COOPERATIVENESS. STEWART SAID US FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT MADE ACCESS TO INFORMATION MUCH EASIER BUT US "HAD MANY MORE THINGS TO HIDE."

4. SEARS AND STEWART AGREED ON SEARS COMMENT THAT CANADA USUALLY RATES ABOUT FOUR ON A WASHINGTON INTEREST SCALE OF ZERO TO ONE HUNDRED, "BETWEEN CHAD AND SIERRA LEONE."

5. ON TRUDEAU WASHINGTON VISIT, BOTH SURPRISED WITH STRENGTH OF SPEECH TO CONGRESS, APPRECIATING THAT TRUDEAU REALLY SPEAKING TO CANADA AS MOST AMERICANS HEARD LITTLE ABOUT SPEECH. STEWART CONTINUED HE ORIGINALLY THOUGH ADDRESS A TRIUMPH BUT HAS CHANGED MIND BECAUSE OF "EXTRAVAGANT" LANGUAGE WHICH PROBABLY CONFUSED US PEOPLE. AS "AMERICA'S RECORD IN

FOOLING AROUND IN OTHER PEOPLE'S BUSINESS NOT GOOD," STEWART FELT ONE SHOULD BE CAREFUL ABOUT ALARMING THE AMERICANS.

6. WHEN ASKED ABOUT FUTURE OF BILATERAL RELATIONSHIP, STEWART SAID HE SAW MAJOR CONTINUING PROBLEMS AS WATER AND ENERGY. SEARS REPLIED THAT IF QUEBEC SEPARATES, THE US COULD REALLY BECOME WORRIED ABOUT A "CUBAN-TYPE OF RADICALISM" ON ITS BORDERS AND THE DEFENSE WILL BE THE MAIN ISSUE.

7. STEWART THEN OBSERVED THAT PRESIDENT CARTER IS LIKE TRUDEAU IN GIVING FAST REPLY AND THAT STATEMENT IN PRESIDENT'S CTV INTERVIEW REGARDING QUEBEC WORRIED HIM BECAUSE OF US INTERVENTIONIST HISTORY. SEARS SAID THAT US INTEREST IN A STRONG UNITED CANADA MUST BE OBVIOUS. STEWART CALLED THIS OBSERVATION A STANDARD FEDERALIST APPROACH, EQUATING QUEBEC SEPARATION WITH INSTABILITY. HE CONTINUED THAT THE PRESIDENT'S STATEMENT HIT QUEBEC "LIKE A STICK OF DYNAMITE" AND MAY HAVE LONG-TERM NEGATIVE EFFECTS ON CANADIAN UNITY.
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8. THE JOURNALISTS ALSO DISAGREED ON THE NEW YORK SPEECH OF LEVESQUE. SEARS FELT QUEBEC IS TOO IMPORTANT TO THE US FOR THE SPEECH TO HAVE HAD A SERIOUS LONG-TERM NEGATIVE EFFECT ON US ATTITUDES. STEWART SAID THE SPEECH WAS A DISASTER AS THE PREMIER TRIED TO BOTH SOOTHE NEW YORK AND SPEAK TO QUEBEC AND SATISFIED NEITHER. HE SUGGESTED THAT SPEECH MAY HAVE HAD EFFECT ON RESURGENCE OF LIBERALS IN THE POLLS SOON AFTERWARDS.

9. AGREEMENT WAS REACHED ON ONE POINT OF QUEBEC ISSUE AS PROGRAM ENDED. SEARS SAID THAT ONTARIO SHOULD KEEP A LOT CALMER THAN UP TO NOW ON QUEBEC. STEWART AGREED THAT THE MEDIA LANGUAGE WAS GOING OVERBOARD.

10. COMMENT: THE DISCUSSION EVIDENCE AGAIN THE STANDARD STEWART POSE REGARDING THE US-UNIMPRESSED, MORALLY SUPERIOR AND WORRIED ABOUT TRUDEAU'S "ELEPHANT-MOUSE" RELATIONSHIP. IN

HIS CASE, IT APPEARS THE AMERICAN "ELEPHANT" MIGHT NOT TURN
OVER IN BED AND CRUSH THE CANADIAN "MOUSE" AS MUCH AS STEWART
SEES THAT A "MOUSE" BEING TRAMPLED IN THE STAMPEDE AFTER
FRIGHTENING THE "ELEPHANT." SEARS REFLECTED A MORE TYPICAL
ONTARIO ATTITUDE IN VIEWING THE NEW ADMINISTRATION'S
ATTITUDES TOWARD GOVERNMENT, HUMAN RIGHTS, ETC., AS POSITIVE
ELEMENTS WITH DUE RECOGNITION OF THE IMPOSSIBILITY OF OVERNIGHT
LEGISLATIVE CHANGE. IN VIEW OF THE STAR'S ACTIVIST APPROACH
TO THE QUEBEC ISSUE, IT WAS A SURPRISE TO HEAR SEARS ADVOCATE
MODERATION.
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